



# Ontario/ Rhône-Alpes Student Exchange Program

## Handbook 2010–2011

for students coming to Ontario  
from

# RHÔNE-ALPES

Updated March 2010

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## Introduction

Congratulations! You have been chosen to participate in the Ontario/Rhône-Alpes (ORA) University Student Exchange Program, collaborative initiatives of universities in Rhône-Alpes and the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The exchange is a personal opportunity for you to pursue your studies at one of the participating universities in Ontario while remaining a degree candidate at your home university, and to grow from the experience of living in a foreign culture.

This handbook exists in both printed and electronic versions on the ORA website at [www.yorku.ca/ontra](http://www.yorku.ca/ontra). The electronic version, with hyperlinks, can be read and printed with Adobe Acrobat Reader (instructions are provided on the website).

The handbook gives you information that will help you make the most of your year in Ontario. You should also consult the website of your host university for further information and practical advice regarding your time in Ontario.



**Be alert to this symbol: It signals key information worth noting and knowing!**

This Handbook focuses on **generic** rather than **specific** issues.

The information is based on the experience of the Program Office, official and unofficial sources, and the advice of former participants, to whom we are especially indebted. Technical terms and common abbreviations are listed beginning on page 23.

The **Ontario Program Office**, housed at York University, is there to help you and to answer any questions you may have now and during your stay in Ontario. The contact information is listed on the inside front cover of this Handbook. If you are phoning us from Europe, please remember that it is six hours earlier in Ontario.

## Expectations and Responsibilities

The Program Office will do all it can to assist you. In the interests of avoiding misunderstandings, please be aware of, and hold to, the

following list of expectations and responsibilities:

- 1) You are expected to engage in full-time, **NON-DEGREE** study at your host university for a maximum of one academic year. The definition of “full-time study” may vary by discipline and level. Advanced students engaged in research are responsible for obtaining the approval of their home program for the type and amount of work to be done. Students engaging solely in course work should plan to be formally enrolled in at least three courses per academic term. **Please note:** Attending a course as an “auditor” [*auditeur ou auditrice libre*] does not count as being formally enrolled.
- 2) You are responsible for keeping the Program Office informed of your current address, telephone number, and e-mail address.
- 3) You are responsible for **all aspects** of your participation in the Program, including, but not limited to, your health, safety, lodging, course selection, study program, travel plans, legal status and financial obligations. The Ontario Program Office, your home and host universities, and their representatives and agents assume no financial or other liability arising from or related to your participation in the Program.
- 4) You are responsible for submitting a final report on your participation in the Program to the Program Office by the end of June 2011, and for responding to requests for information from the Program Office during the year.
- 5) As a student officially enrolled at **both** your host university and your home university, you are expected to be aware of, and observe, the regulations of both institutions. **Don’t forget to enrol at your home university.**
- 6) Credit for work done abroad is granted at the discretion of your **home university**. You are responsible for documenting work done abroad, and for applying to your home university for credit you wish to receive.
- 7) After you return home, we hope that you will stay in contact with us. We hope too that you will want to act as a mentor for Ontario students coming to your home university and an ambassador for the Program.

## Calendar August 2010 – August 2011

|  |   |
|--|---|
| August 23.....                                     | latest date (morning) to arrive in Toronto for the Orientation Workshop |
| August 23–25.....                                  | Orientation Workshop in Toronto   |
| September 6.....                                   | Labour Day (holiday)  |
| Week of September 6.....                           | orientation activities, final enrolment at most universities            |
| Week of September 6.....                           | classes begin at most universities*                                     |
| September – mid-December.....                      | fall term classes and examinations**                                    |
| Mid-December 2010 – early January 2011.....        | Christmas vacation**  |
| Early January – end of April / early May 2011..... | winter term classes and examinations**                                  |
| Early May 2011.....                                | Orientation weekend for new Ontario students going on ORA ***           |
| Late May to early June 2011.....                   | Orientation Seminar ( <i>Journée d'information</i> ) in Rhône-Alpes***  |

\* Some classes may begin earlier; consult your host university's calendar for the start of classes.

\*\* Consult your host university's calendar for precise dates.

\*\*\* We hope you'll be able to attend one of these and share your experience with future participants.

## Orientation Workshops

By the time you arrive in Ontario, we hope you will have attended the “outgoing” Orientation (*Journée d'information*) in Lyon. We also hope you will attend the three-day “incoming” Orientation Workshop in Toronto, August 23–25. Page 9 of this Handbook provides information on the Toronto Orientation Workshop – please also consult the Program website for updated information.

## Travel Arrangements to Canada

You are responsible for making your own travel arrangements to Canada. The sooner you do this, the better chance you have of finding a relatively inexpensive flight. The Orientation Workshop begins Monday, August 23 and ends Wednesday, August 25.



**Please arrive at York University, Glendon College, in Toronto by 10:30 a.m., Monday, August 23, 2010. You may have to fly on Sunday, August 22 in order to arrive on time.**

**York University has 2 campuses in Toronto, Glendon and Keele). The orientation this year is taking place at the Glendon campus located at 2275 Bayview Ave, corner of Bayview Ave and Lawrence Ave.**

In booking your flight, keep in mind that sometimes seats open up closer to the flight. You may wish to book an “open-jaw” flight (meaning that you fly into one airport [such as Toronto], but plan ahead to fly home from another airport [such as Vancouver]).



Especially if you are not taking a direct flight to Toronto, pack a “survival kit” with a change of clothes in

your carry-on luggage.

There have been many reports of checked luggage arriving days after the passenger to whom it belongs.

After the Orientation Workshop, you will also have to get to your host university. Students studying outside Toronto will have the following options: rental car, bus, train or plane. You may want to consult the Via Rail website for information on train schedules and fares ([www.viarail.ca](http://www.viarail.ca)) and the Greyhound website for information on buses ([www.greyhound.ca](http://www.greyhound.ca)). Again, you are responsible for making your own arrangements (we advise that you book trains in advance, but this is not necessary for bus travel). The Ontario Program Office does not have the expertise or ability to make travel plans for you. (For general travel information, see page 18.)

Check out the orientation schedules of your host university before booking your flight; in some cases it may make sense to go to your host university before coming to the Program's Orientation Workshop. This will give you the opportunity to “get settled” before meeting up with the larger group. We strongly advise you to inform the university's International Student Office of your Host University when you are coming, and to get their confirmation that they are expecting you.

If you are arriving in Toronto prior to the Orientation Workshop, the Program Office will **do its best** to help you arrange accommodation at Glendon, York University, if you wish.

Otherwise, youth hostels exist in a number of Ontario locations: Barrie, Niagara Falls, Ottawa, Orillia, Peterborough, Sault Ste. Marie (pronounced “soo saint marie”), Thunder Bay, and Toronto. More information for Hostelling International hostels is at: [www.hihostels.ca/](http://www.hihostels.ca/);

other hostels ([www.hostels.com/ca.on.html](http://www.hostels.com/ca.on.html)) are in most university cities. There are many private hostels in Toronto, some of them right downtown (Church Street, King Street, Gerrard St. West, etc.). You can check their rates and facilities at [www.hostels.com/en/ca.on.to.html](http://www.hostels.com/en/ca.on.to.html).



These hostels are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and are busy in the summer months. In Toronto, wherever you wish to stay, book in advance!

If you wish to become a Youth Hostel member, check these websites: [www.hihostels.ca](http://www.hihostels.ca) and [www.fuaj.org](http://www.fuaj.org). Memberships cost \$35.00 + tax in Canada, possibly less in Europe. In addition, the following links may help you find inexpensive accommodation:

Ontario: [www.travellerspoint.com/budget-accommodation-en-co-37.html](http://www.travellerspoint.com/budget-accommodation-en-co-37.html);

Toronto: [www.travellerspoint.com/budget-accommodation-en-ci-1288.html](http://www.travellerspoint.com/budget-accommodation-en-ci-1288.html).

And don't forget these two sites:

[www.couchsurfing.com](http://www.couchsurfing.com);

[www.hospitalityclub.org/](http://www.hospitalityclub.org/).

Your host university (or other universities) may also be able to function as a short-term hostel in August. To find out whether this is possible, please contact the International Office of the university in question. Often the residences are managed by the university's "Hospitality Services" or "Conference Services" in the summer, and you can also contact them.

## Admission to an Ontario University

You have been admitted as a **non-degree** student (sometimes this is called a "special student" or "post-degree student"), which means that, although you are formally enrolled in courses, **these courses are not part of a program of study toward a degree at the host university.**

French students (and university officials) sometimes make two assumptions based on their experiences with the educational systems of France and the United States. First, they assume that the university system in Canada (and Ontario in particular) is the same as that in the United States. Second, they assume that the traditional distinction between *L*, *M*, *D*, in Rhône-Alpes is the equivalent of the

distinction between undergraduate and graduate study in Ontario.

Although both assumptions are understandable, neither is valid. Given the degree of autonomy enjoyed by the academic programs and individual universities, it is not possible to give a "rule" for when a Rhône-Alpes student ceases to be an undergraduate and begins to be a graduate student in Ontario. It is generally the case, however, that Ontario universities do not regard the *Master 1* or *Bac + 4* as qualifying examinations for graduate study. Please do not be insulted if you have been admitted as an undergraduate; your host university will do its best to see that you enrol in those courses for which you are qualified, your classification as an undergraduate or graduate student notwithstanding.

Although universities tend to admit exchange students for the period from September to May, students participating in the ORA Student Exchange Programs may study for up to one full year (twelve months). If you wish to continue your studies in the summer of 2011, ask your host university whether it will be offering appropriate courses and whether you may enrol in them. If you receive permission to enrol in summer courses, you remain a member of the Program. Please remember that you must ensure that your Study Permit is valid for the full duration of your studies in Canada. That means that you do not have to pay tuition for those courses. If you are told otherwise, please contact the Program Office, though please remember that it is ultimately your host university that will decide.

## Tuition Fees (= \$0.00) / Student Activity Fees

Normally, a student who is neither a citizen nor a permanent resident of Canada would pay approximately three times the normal ("domestic") tuition fee of a student who is a citizen or permanent resident.

For you, the following rules apply that protect you from paying tuition fees in Ontario:

- 1) You remain a part of the degree program at your home university.
- 2) You pay tuition fees according to your home university's regulations while you are on exchange.
- 3) You are not enrolled in a degree program in Ontario.

Despite this, in a few cases, if you want to take special courses that are not part of the regular curriculum (for example: English as a Second

Language), you may be charged extra. Some universities also require students to pay student activity fees. The only difference is: policies (and prices) vary from university to university. Ask the International Student Advisor at your host university. And if, by some chance, your host university tries to bill you for tuition and you do not succeed in convincing them that this is a mistake, please contact the Program Office.

## Study Permit (Visa)

We have done our best to ensure the accuracy of the following information. But misunderstandings are possible, and regulations can change. So you may wish to check out certain aspects for yourself.



**To study in Canada, you must have a “Study Permit” (a kind of visa). The bilingual, fillable form “Application for a Study Permit / Demande de Permis d’Études” is available online here: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/kits/forms/IMM1294B.PDF](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pdf/kits/forms/IMM1294B.PDF).**

You can download the Study Permit guidelines and application from: [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/france/visas/etudier-fr.asp](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canadaeuropa/france/visas/etudier-fr.asp).

This material is also available from the Canadian Embassy: 37 Avenue Montaigne, 75008 Paris (01 44 43 29 00); [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canada-europa/france/visas/visas-fr.asp](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/canada-europa/france/visas/visas-fr.asp)

The fee for a Study Permit is currently CAD \$125 (or €80).

Please note: If you plan to study in Ontario for less than 6 months (one semester for example) you do not need a Study Permit. If you are not sure whether you will stay only one semester, it may be wiser to apply for a Study Permit.

If you need to have your Study Permit extended you can get the information you need at: [www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/application/extend-student.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/information/application/extend-student.asp).

The responsible officials at the Canadian Embassies are aware of our Exchange Programs and will do their best to ensure that Study Permits are issued with the least possible complications.

When you have been formally admitted to an Ontario university, you will receive a letter to that effect from the university. This is an

important document that you will need for your Study Permit. Do not lose it! Each year, the Ontario Program Office sends a list of the Rhône-Alpes students to the Embassy in Paris, but your own letter of admission will still be required at some point in the process.

After approving your application, the Embassies will issue you a confirmation letter. It will also transmit this information to the “Ports of Entry” in Canada (e.g. international airports). You are entitled to enter Canada as soon as you have received your confirmation letter from the Embassy. When you enter Canada, you will be asked to show:

- your passport;
- the Embassy’s confirmation letter;
- the offer of admission from your host university; and
- evidence of adequate funds (including money for a return ticket, or the ticket itself).

Then the official will issue your actual Study Permit and attach it to your passport.



**Keep the documents listed above (and the confirmation you received from the Program Office) with you when you fly and do not put them into your checked luggage, which you will claim only after you clear Canada Customs and Immigration. Do not enter Canada as a “visitor” with the expectation that you will be able to obtain a Study Permit once you are here. You cannot apply for a Study Permit at a Port of Entry or in Canada.**

If you have sent clothing, books, or other personal effects to Canada by mail or some other carrier, be sure to tell the Customs Officer about this at the first check (you should also indicate it on the e311 form you hand the officer – for a sample, see [cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/forms-formulaires/e311-eng.pdf](http://cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/publications/forms-formulaires/e311-eng.pdf) or the equivalent French form [e311-fra.pdf](http://e311-fra.pdf)). The officer might not ask you. You are allowed to bring personal effects with you duty free, but you may be charged customs duty and handling charges later unless you get a stamped form indicating that you declared these items when you entered Canada.

It will simplify the process if you include a copy of your “pre-authorization” letter from the Embassy with any list of contents in the packages you ship, and if you have a list of what you have shipped to show the Customs Officer when you first enter Canada. The Program Office has requested that the relevant Embassy approve a twelve-month Study

Permit for you. Make sure the Immigration Officer gives you the appropriate dates at the Port of Entry. Otherwise you will have to pay extra to have it extended later.

- *Passport*

Your passport must be valid for at least one day beyond your stay in Canada. A machine readable and/or a biometric passport is not required to enter Canada, but things are different in the U.S.

- *Travel to the USA*

If you plan to travel several times to the United States during your stay in Canada, a single entry visa will allow you to re-enter Canada several times after travel to the United States, as long as it is within the period authorized by the immigration officer when you first enter Canada.

If there is a chance you will be visiting the United States, be certain you are aware of that country's entrance rules. Check this website: [travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without\\_1990.html#countries](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html#countries).

France is a “Visa Waiver Program” (VWP) country. French citizens visiting the United States as tourists for less than 90 days do not need a U.S. visa if their passports meet the program's criteria. For VWP regulations, see: [www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id\\_visa/business\\_pleasure/vwp/](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/business_pleasure/vwp/). To check passport criteria, see:

[www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id\\_visa/business\\_pleasure/vwp/epssprt\\_vwp.xml](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/id_visa/business_pleasure/vwp/epssprt_vwp.xml).

If you do need a U.S. visa, however, it may well be more convenient to get it in France. For information on U.S. visas, contact the nearest U.S. consulate or the embassy. The following website can give you orientation: [france.usembassy.gov/](http://france.usembassy.gov/). You can also check [www.travel.state.gov/](http://www.travel.state.gov/).

## Other Formalities

Canada does not have residence registration offices (*taxe d'habitation*), registration offices for non-citizens (*carte de séjour*) or radio and television taxes (*redevance de l'audiovisuel*), so you don't have to worry about any of that.

You do need to arrange for [Health Insurance](#) in Canada. Moreover, you should also enquire about liability (*responsabilité civile*) insurance and insurance for your personal property while you are traveling and in your home in Ontario.

Make certain that there is someone at home who can take care of university and other business that might arise while you are away.

## Health & Other Insurance

- *Health Insurance (UHIP)*

The universities of Ontario have arranged for international students to be covered by the “University Health Insurance Plan” (UHIP; pronounced “you-hip”).



**Participation in UHIP is COMPULSORY for international students as well as their dependents. UHIP is regulated by the Council of Ontario Universities. It is in effect at all Ontario universities except the University of Windsor, which has its own required insurance plan (“Green Shield”). Universities cannot alter or waive UHIP fees or conditions.**

UHIP covers you for the time you are *studying* in Canada, beginning the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month before term starts (i.e.: August 10). If you are arriving in Canada earlier than that, please ensure that you have coverage for the interim.

The Program Office believes that UHIP coverage is a fair value for the dollar. One-person coverage costs \$63.00 per month (rates valid until August 2010). You will pay for at least the first 4 months when you arrive at your host university. The coverage is different from that in France, and we strongly recommend that you inform yourself about what is covered and what isn't. For more information on UHIP visit the following site: [www.uhip.ca](http://www.uhip.ca).

UHIP covers you for hospital and medical services that you need to maintain your health in Canada. It does not cover the cost of most prescription medicines or of most dental services. If you plan to travel outside Canada, you need additional health insurance. Find out whether your home insurance will cover you.

- *Telehealth Ontario*

The government of Ontario provides 24-hour-a-day free and confidential health advice under the toll-free number 1 866 797-0000. If you have a health concern, you can speak to a registered nurse who will advise you on the best course of action. **Please note: This service does not replace the number for emergency situations: 9-1-1.**

- *Other Categories of Insurance*

They include: auto, travel, home, and special coverage for sports accidents and the like. Trip cancellation insurance is also useful. If you rent a car you'll need auto insurance.

For your room (in residence or shared accommodation) you may want to buy home insurance and especially home contents insurance. Theft is the number one crime on campuses. If you are concerned about personal possessions such as a laptop, digital camera, music instrument, etc. make sure you know what type of insurance you have in France for all your portable electronics and other valuables. Or you can consider buying an insurance policy while in Canada.

Please remember – insurance companies do not issue policies *after* something happens. Make sure you have adequate insurance coverage from the beginning!

## What to Bring with You

When you arrive you may be wearing shorts and a t-shirt. Summers can be quite hot; but in winter it can get **very** cold. You will need a good winter coat, hat, gloves, and boots. Some of these may be less expensive here in Canada (consult the students on last year's exchange).

The following items are absolutely essential:

- ✓ passport
- ✓ Study Permit
- ✓ ticket
- ✓ offer of admission
- ✓ money (some cash, credit card, traveler's cheques)
- ✓ Glendon campus map.

One student's checklist included the following:

- ✓ international driver's license
- ✓ vaccination record
- ✓ notes on where to go
- ✓ receipts (e.g. for residence deposits)
- ✓ your *relevé de notes*.

If you have a laptop, bring it. Please do not bring other electrical devices such as hair dryers or frying pans. Electric razors are probably okay. Voltage in Canada is 110.

## Finances

The Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) [www.cbie.ca/](http://www.cbie.ca/) and your host university are the best sources of information

on the costs and other money matters in general and on your host city in particular. The exchange rate between the Euro and the Canadian dollar is quite variable. As of February 2010, the exchange rate was €1.00 = CAD \$1.46.

Expect to spend at least CAD \$1000 per month (around €80).

## Money

You should bring with you some **traveler's cheques** (\$1500 - \$2000 is a reasonable amount) to tide you over until you can transfer money from bank to bank. Buy Canadian dollar traveler's cheques from your bank at home, although you may have to order them a few days ahead. If you use US dollar cheques, you will pay twice for the conversion. In addition bring some CAD \$300 in cash. Once you get to your host university, one of the first things you should do is to set up a bank account. You will need an institution to which funds can be transferred from home, and a way of paying bills while in Canada. As in Europe, there are different kinds of bank accounts in Canada. You will be interested in a **chequing account**, which is the closest to *compte chèques*. With such a "current account," you can pay bills by cheque. You might want to check with your bank at home to see if it has a correspondence or partner bank in Canada (e.g., BNP Paribas / Scotiabank). You will probably get a bank ATM (automated teller machine) card or debit card to access your Canadian account; ask for such a card when you open your account (there may be a delay in issuing it).

## Credit Cards and Bank Drafts

Major credit cards are also handy to have, but you probably will not be able to get one in Canada. So if you want one, bring it along. They can be a convenient means to transfer money quickly from France to Canada. If you give your parents or some other **trusted** person power of attorney (*une procuration*) to access your credit card account at home, they can deposit money in that account up to the credit limit. You can then simply withdraw the money from that account in Canada. You should not be charged interest. **This is the theory, but we recommend that you consult your bank at home about the details of this kind of transaction (esp. transaction fees) before you leave for Canada.** A credit card is almost a must if you are planning on renting a car; without one, the rental company may require a large cash security deposit (*caution*).

Canadians use credit cards to pay for everything. Bear in mind that, if you are using a European credit card, the amounts will be converted into Euros and be payable in France. Another way to transfer money is by bank draft. Someone at home can purchase a bank draft in Canadian dollars and send it to you by mail. You then deposit it in your account in Canada. The Canadian bank will assess you a service charge; you should ask prospective Canadian banks about their service charges in this regard, and also how long it takes you can get the cash. You may find a branch of one or more major banks at your host university.

### **Budgeting**

You will have substantial costs at the beginning of your stay in your host city.

- Transportation from orientation to your host university city;
- Accommodation (see page 10);
- You may also have to pay a student service fee;
- Health and other insurance;
- Books;
- Because you do not know your host city, you will not be able to live as economically. Student discounts (*tarifs étudiants*) are available for some events, but they are not as widespread or as helpful as they are in France.

It is important that you have a personal monthly budget and that you monitor it, especially at the beginning of your stay. Food, accommodation, travel, and living a European-style life (including eating habits) in Canada will take up most of your budget.

### **Financial Aid**

Financial aid takes many forms. As a member of the ORA exchange, you automatically receive a tuition waiver (*exemption des droits d'inscription*) worth several thousand dollars from your host university.

A very few members of the exchange may qualify for other kinds of financial assistance (a Teaching Assistantship, Research Assistantship, or Graduate Assistantship) from their host university in Ontario. These positions are mostly offered to students placed at the graduate level.

La plupart d'entre vous bénéficiera d'une Bourse Explo'ra Sup. N'oubliez pas de faire signer le premier Certificat de Présence au début de votre séjour et le 2<sup>e</sup> Certificat à la fin

de votre séjour. Ce deuxième certificat vous permettra de percevoir le solde de votre bourse (25%). Chaque certificat doit avoir un tampon officiel de l'université qui vous accueille. Vérifiez sur le site web de la Région Rhône-Alpes

<http://www.rhonealpes.fr/30-emploi-et-formation.htm>

puis cliquez sur Explo'ra Sup.

## **Advice and Support**

The best way to get official information about (or from) your host university before and after you arrive in Ontario is to contact its International Office. It may be called the International Student Centre, “[university] International,” or something else, but all Ontario universities have one. This office can give you details on procedures, help arrange for a room in residence, and generally advise you on all aspects of academic life. Some offices have special “survival guides” for international students, and some sponsor inexpensive and interesting outings. Others have peer mentor programs that match you with a local student who can help you get oriented.

The Ontario and Rhône-Alpes universities recognize the need to give you special support, especially at the beginning of your stay in Ontario. Several modes of support are in place to help you.



Each Ontario university has designated someone as the “primary liaison person” for the ORA Student Exchange. Sometimes that person is also the university's International Student Advisor. **Contact persons are listed on page 21 of this Handbook.** These people will help you with some formalities you will have to go through during the first few days, including finding a room, paying any student service fees, obtaining a library card, and enrolling in courses.

The most effective support system may well be student-based, relying on the expertise of Ontario students who have spent a year in Rhône-Alpes, and students from those regions who have spent a year in Ontario. For this purpose, we have made a mailing list available at [ORA-LIST@yorku.ca](mailto:ORA-LIST@yorku.ca). You are automatically signed up to this list upon acceptance in the program.

Also feel free to contact the Program Office at any time. The contact information is listed in

the box at the bottom of the inside front cover of this Handbook.

Finally, don't forget *la DRI* of your home university.

## Arriving in Ontario: The Orientation Workshop

Because students arrive in Toronto at different dates for the joint Orientation Workshop, we cannot meet you at the Toronto airport. Try to share a taxi from the airport to York University – Glendon College with other students. The total cost should be about \$40.00-45.00. Airport “limousines” may be less expensive than regular taxis.

The August Orientation Workshop (for ORA students, along with students from Baden-Württemberg in Germany, Maharashtra and Goa in India and Jiangsu in China) begins on Monday, August 23, and continues until Wednesday, August 25. It will take place in Toronto, using Glendon College, York University as a base.

The Workshop will give you a chance to relax and get over your jetlag and culture shock, provide you with important information about life in Ontario, and let you have some fun.

Unfortunately, we must ask you to contribute to help finance the Workshop. With accommodation for two nights (August 23–24 and 24–25), meals, transportation in Toronto for two days, recreation, and programming, the cost per student is CAD \$100.00. The Ontario Program Office will cover the rest of the costs for these days, except for some optional incidentals.



Please note: Hotmail and Yahoo e-mail addresses may have difficulties with attachments. We advise against your using these e-mail addresses. If you still wish to do so, make sure you receive all the documentation we send you prior to the Workshop. Again, **if you are changing your e-mail address, please let us know.**

If you have already gone to your host university and are returning to Toronto for the Workshop, we regret that we cannot help to pay for transportation to the Workshop.

Every year one or two students ask whether they can bring a friend or relative to the Orientation. Unfortunately, we are not able to accommodate extra guests, even if they were to pay their own way. More important, this

workshop is for “our group” as a group. We ask your understanding for this policy.

## Arriving at Your Host University

If you are going to your host university for the first time after the Orientation Workshop, you will appreciate the advantages of traveling light. On Wednesday, August 25, the Orientation Workshop will end in the early afternoon and you will have to find your way to your host university.

You should make an effort to contact your host university prior to your arrival. Find out where on campus to go and whether someone can meet you.

Most universities have their own orientation activities in the fall, most of which are intended for first-year students, colloquially referred to as “freshmen/women” or “frosh.” “Frosh week” can be a lot of fun, even for older students, although you must be prepared for a certain amount of immaturity, silliness, and even poor taste (*fr: bizutage*). In any case, it is an interesting phenomenon. Find out if your host university has an orientation, and when it is scheduled.

Depending on where you have studied before, you may not have had first-hand experience with a “campus.” There are more and less attractive campuses in Ontario, but all share the notion that the university is a special place that is different from the rest of the city. Campuses tend to have basic amenities such as a bookstore, bank or bank machine, convenience store, cafés, pubs and the like, but the level of development and the quality of the services vary from campus to campus.

Some universities are primarily residential; that is, most of the students live on or near campus. Others are “commuter campuses” where students attend classes in much the same way that employees go to work during the day and go home in the evening. Depending on the flavour of the campus, there will be more or less nightlife. In deciding whether to live “on campus” (in residence) or “off campus,” you should consider, in addition to the factors mentioned above, how easy it is to get to the campus in the winter (see the following section on Accommodations).

## Accommodations

There is no institution comparable to the *CROUS* in Canada. This means that university residences are run directly by the university. On the one hand, this is an advantage: The universities have more direct control over residence space. On the other hand, residences are not subsidized, so the universities have to charge you what it costs them to run the residences.

The universities of Ontario and Rhône-Alpes have an understanding that students participating in the Program are eligible for residence rooms. Spaces in residence are limited, however. Some universities will have separate graduate residences, and others do not have residence space for graduate students at all.

Living in residence (“*rez*”) is very convenient. You are right on campus, and you don’t have to worry about getting to the university for classes. You also have a good chance to meet Canadian students. Residences tend to have a high proportion of first-year students (18–19 years old). They often need to “let off steam” before they settle down to university life, and a number of European students have found the noise level, drinking and other activities in residence a source of discomfort. (Others, however, have loved it in residence.)

Many residence contracts require you to buy a “meal plan” (see the next section on Food). Residence students may also have to leave over the Christmas holidays (or pay extra): Ask about such conditions before you sign any contract.

Some residence rooms are in a suite but many are small bedrooms (*sans lavabo*), with bathrooms and kitchens “down the hall.” Specify what kind you would like. Also make it clear that you are older than most Canadian undergraduates, and ask whether you can get a room in a graduate residence or in a residence which is quiet (we hear this is particularly important for those students going to Laurentian – make it clear you want to be in MSR: the Mature Students’ Residence). And find out whether you can cancel the rental agreement if things don’t work out (or what the penalty would be). In some residences at some universities, you are free to cancel your rental contract at any time; in other situations, there can be heavy financial penalties.

If you are living in residence, you will probably be asked to pay several months’ rent in advance. Sometimes the International

Student Advisor at your host university can authorize a deferment (postponement) of payment, although there may be a fee for this service.

Many students choose to live off-campus. The best solution is usually shared accommodation in a house. Find out whether your rental contract or lease (*un bail*) will allow you to move out without penalty if things change. Be sure to get a written agreement spelling out what is included and what is not. Consider carefully the length of the agreement: renters often prefer tenants to sign a 12-month contract. The custom is to pay first and last month’s rent when you move in, and give a 60-day notice to the landlord/lady before you wish to move out. Your host university’s International Office can refer you to the proper place to help you find a room off campus.

When choosing off-campus accommodation, make sure it is conveniently served by local transportation.

There are many websites that offer shared accommodation. Check out [www.roommates.ca](http://www.roommates.ca). You can get advice on where to stay when you first arrive in Ontario from the website: [www.settlement.org/sys/faqs\\_detail.asp?faq\\_id=4000326](http://www.settlement.org/sys/faqs_detail.asp?faq_id=4000326).

## Eating, Drinking, Smoking, etc.

If you live in residence, you may have to participate in a “meal plan.” This means that you pay for food in advance, whether you eat it or not. You should enquire carefully about the meal plans offered by your host university. Meal plans can be convenient in that you don’t have to cook for yourself. On the other hand, they are not inexpensive, and the food is not gourmet (*pas de restaurant universitaire*). If you do take a meal plan, ensure you are not left with unused credit at the end of the year. Some universities also have “kitchen plans” which give you the opportunity (at a price) to prepare your own meals; and some universities have agreements with off-campus restaurants where you can use meal-plan credit.

It’s hard to define “Canadian cooking” in the same way as one would speak of “French cooking.” There are regional specialties (like pea soup), foodstuffs (like maple syrup), and ways of preparation. Since Canada is a multicultural society, Canadian cooking has a lot of variety. Ethnic restaurants and grocery stores, and open-air markets, can be more affordable

and a lot more interesting than fast food places. Check around. Organic, fat-free, and cholesterol-free food is quite trendy these days.

Speaking of restaurants: In Canada and the United States, the tip (*pourboire*) is usually not included in the bill. You are expected to tip for table service (as opposed to cafeteria service). The normal tip in Ontario is about 15%. Since the combined taxes on food usually come to 13%, some people leave a tip a bit above the taxes (“tip the tax”).

One big difference between Canada and France concerns alcoholic beverages. In Ontario, you must buy wine, liquor, and beer in special stores operated by the Province of Ontario. They are referred to as the “LCBO” (Liquor Control Board of Ontario) and “Brewers’ Retail” (or “the beer store”). In smaller towns only one will be present, but it will sell all alcoholic beverages. In some cities, large supermarkets may have a wine store within them.

The “moralistic approach” to drinking is also reflected in laws about which restaurants can sell alcoholic beverages and about drinking in public. You can only drink in public if the place is licensed by the Liquor Licensing Board of Ontario. If you are camping, your tent is considered non-public, so you may drink, but some parks have their own restrictions on drinking.



**Important Note: You cannot have an open bottle of alcohol in a car, on the street, on a beach, or in any other “public place” unless it is “licensed.” And please remember: Do not drink and drive!**

The non-smoking policy in effect at Ontario universities and in public buildings all over the province and in other parts of North America also applies to restaurants and bars. This means that smoking is restricted to certain areas (mostly outside).

Nudity, body contact and sexuality are other areas in which Canadians tend to be less relaxed than the French. Be aware of the patterns of behaviour to which Canadians are accustomed.

## Registering at your Host University

Once you arrive at your host university, you will have to do a certain amount of bureau-

cratic work. It is nothing terrible, but it may involve some standing in line. It’s important that you get your student identification card and that the university has your address, etc. Remember, you do not pay tuition, but you may have to pay for student services. The most important thing is that you have to get through all these administrative chores before courses start. You have to be ready to study as of the first day of classes.

## Course Selection

Courses can be distinguished by their level, length, number of weekly contact hours (*CM et TD*), and type of instruction. Canadian undergraduate degree programs are typically referred to as either “three-year programs” or “four-year [honours] programs.” Some fourth-year honours courses can be as demanding as courses at the Master’s level. Learn how to read course codes.

Two examples:

### 1) York University

#### **AS/POLI 4175 6.0A**

- AS = Faculty of Arts
- POLI = Department of Political Science
- 4175 = fourth-year level;
- 6.0 = 6 credits, that is two terms (Fall and Winter)
- A = section

### 2) The University of Western Ontario

#### **Political Science 4406F/G**

A course at the fourth level meeting for one term (the letters “F” and “G” designate this as a fall-term course or a winter-term course respectively); the calendar further states that there are two seminar hours per week.

Courses that meet for one term only are often called “half-courses”; courses that meet for two terms are often called “full courses.” The number of credit points attached to a course varies by university. For example, a one-semester course may be worth 3 credits at one university, and 5 credits at another. Note: **These credits are not equivalent to ECTS points.**

Sometimes you will hear students or professors referring to courses as “third-year” or “second-year” courses. In most cases, this does not mean that the students are all in their third or second year. It simply designates the level of the course. Graduate course numbers often begin with a 5 or higher, but it is not unusual for fourth-level and fifth-level (that is: advanced undergraduate and beginning graduate) courses to be combined.

It will be clear from the two examples given above that course numbering systems, as well as the information they provide, vary markedly from university to university. The specifics of each university's system for designating courses cannot be covered here, but you should be aware that you need to understand the system used at your host university. To do so you are advised to pay careful attention to the appropriate parts of the university's Academic Calendar, in which the system is explained.

Lecture courses (*fr*: *CM*) at Ontario universities resemble those in France in that the principal mode of delivering information is centralized (from the instructor to the students). But lecture courses may also have discussion or tutorial groups (*fr*: *TD*) attached to them; and in any case, you will have to submit written work and/or take a mid-term examination or a final examination.

Tutorials in Canada generate more discussions than in France. In general it is fair to say that in Canada the formal "type" of course is not as important as the kind of work that will be done and the size of the course. You can find out about the kinds of assignments and the marking scheme from the supplemental calendar and/or the course syllabus (*plan de cours*), which will probably be handed out at the first meeting of the course. Also, more and more professors use web pages or Course Management Systems such as Moodle, WebCT, or LotusNotes rather than hard copies to distribute course material.

The Program Office and past participants recommend that you look at a range of course levels and types.

How do you find out about courses? You need to know about three kinds of publications.

- Every university has a "calendar" (in large universities, set of calendars), which looks like a French *Guide de l'étudiant* but differs from it in important ways. The calendar (in the United States it is often referred to as a "course catalogue") lists important dates in the academic year, gives the names of the teaching staff and the officers of the university, and contains the academic and non-academic regulations. The calendar lists all courses which have been approved by the university Senate or equivalent body. In other words, it contains those courses which **may** be taught in a given year. Not all courses listed will be offered during your exchange year.

To find out what is actually being taught, when, and by whom, you may (depending on the university) have to look to two other kinds of documents:

- the "lecture schedule" or "course schedule" (which gives the times and places of courses scheduled for a given year); and
- the supplemental calendar or "mini-calendar" of the units, which resemble the *Contenu des unités d'enseignement* you are used to.



Don't restrict your search for courses to a single department or faculty. The course(s) you need may be in a related department. For example, "Social Science" may house an exciting political science or sociology course. Explore!

Lecture schedules and supplemental calendars for the whole academic year beginning in September are usually available in the previous spring. Course and timetable information can be found on the university web sites. This information is updated regularly, and may alert you to courses that are full or cancelled, or changes in meeting times or places.

Sometimes student groups also issue "counter-calendars" or "anti-calendars" which give students' opinions on specific courses, often based on questionnaires filled out by students in the previous year. Although they must be taken with a grain of salt, they can often give a good indication of which courses are really good and which are really bad. Student groups (for example: Engineering Students' Association) are another potential source of information. Talking about courses is also a good way to make contact with Canadian students.

You should also contact the academic advisor of the department(s) in which you are interested, either when you arrive or by e-mail. These faculty members can be a big help if you are lacking so-called "prerequisites." The existence of several course "levels" goes hand-in-hand with the system of prerequisites, or courses which you need to have taken in order to qualify for other courses. For example, you may find that in order to take a fourth-level seminar, you need to have taken a second-level course in the same area. These restrictions are noted in the calendars, and they can prove frustrating to exchange students who have, after all, very little chance of having taken prerequisite courses. You need to "talk your way into" courses by explaining to the

instructor or the advisor (1) what kind of work you have done in that field already, and (2) that you are an exchange student who will only have one opportunity to take the course.

**Enrolling** in a course (*inscription pédagogique*) is a formal procedure at Canadian universities. Universities charge students by the course, so they have to know exactly which courses a student is taking at a given time. Students enrol themselves by computer or telephone, usually during the summer; occasionally the department or registrar's office enrolls the student. In case of difficulty, your host International Student Office can probably help you.

When a course is full (as defined by the computer) no more enrolments can be accepted. But keep trying until the enrolment deadline. When somebody drops the course a spot becomes free.



You can always talk to the person who has the power to make exceptions. Sometimes that is the instructor, but very often it isn't. Talk to the instructor first to see if there is some leeway. Suggest attending the class informally for a while. That way, if someone else "drops" the course you will be ready to "add" it.

Courses usually start at the time listed, and end ten minutes or so before the next class period. Some universities schedule their courses to start on the hour, some on the half-hour, and some may use a mixed schedule. Courses also meet for different periods of time (usually amounting to three hours per week for undergraduate and two hours per week for graduate courses).



**Dropping and adding** courses are important because students receive grades for all courses in which they are enrolled after a certain date (the "add / drop deadline"). By all means, shop around in the first weeks of term, but **be aware that (1) to get a grade, you must be formally enrolled in the course; and (2) in order NOT to get a grade, you must drop the course before the drop deadline.** If you simply stop attending, or do not hand in the work, you will get a low, and probably failing grade (F) on your record.

Some universities or instructors will allow you to attend a course as an "auditor" (*auditeur / auditrice libre*); for extra courses of interest this might be a possibility. Advice: If you audit a course and do not do the work, you will not benefit much from it. Time management is

essential, and you should prioritize courses in which you are formally enrolled for credit.

If you don't find any courses to your liking, you can always try to persuade a professor to do an "independent reading course" with you or to let you participate in a project. You should also keep in mind that you can probably enrol in courses outside your major field; this year could be a good year to do something different – something that has always interested you but for which you haven't yet made time, or something that is unique to Canada.

You may be tempted to take a large number of courses, either because you want to take full advantage of the different kinds of courses available at your host university, or because you don't want to "waste a year." Obviously, personal choice (and in some cases: requirements of funding agencies) plays a large role here, but for most students, three graduate and four undergraduate courses per semester are plenty to keep you busy. You can easily find yourself overloaded to the point where you miss out on a lot of the benefits (academic and non-academic) of being in Ontario (see the section below on Rhythms of the Ontario Academic Year). In deciding how many courses are right for you, consider the kind and level of course, and whether it is a "full course" or a "half-course": "half-courses" often have a more hectic schedule of reading, writing, and examinations than do "full courses." Be aware that if you take "too many" courses (e.g., more than 10 semester-long courses during your stay), your host university may charge you international tuition fees.

One difference between Europe and Canada is that Canadian professors expect you will buy your own books for each course. Certain courses also put books and readings "on reserve" in the library, but the university's bookstore or local bookshops also order copies of the course books listed by the instructor. These books can be very expensive. Canadian students spend approximately \$1,000 on books per academic year.

Here are some tips for purchasing books. First, you may find that too few have been ordered; thus, it is often advantageous to buy books quickly after the beginning of classes. On the other hand, this means standing in long lines. If you buy them before classes start, you may find that the book is no longer on the reading list. Also for some courses you have to buy "course kits" that can be as expensive as books.

Sometimes you can find second-hand books which are highly discounted, but be careful to establish that you are buying the proper edition. If you buy new books, do not write or mark in them in any way until you are certain you wish to remain in the course. If you do decide to drop the course, you can return unmarked books within a set time limit (check with the bookstore) and get the full price back. If you use the books, you can also sell them back to the bookstore or book bazaar at the end of the course and recoup some of your money.

## The Rhythms of the Ontario Academic Year

As in so many other aspects of university life, the rhythms of the Ontario academic year are not as uniform from institution to institution as they are (or used to be) in France. Starting and ending dates differ by university, and so do the shapes of the year. Most universities have fall and winter terms (beginning in early September and ending in late April or early May), with or without a summer term in addition. But some are on other systems. Get a list of the “**sessional dates**” for your host university (check the university calendar or the web).

As an example, see the University of Toronto page listing sessional and financial dates, exam timetables, holidays, and policies for religious observances and “snow days”:

[www.students.utoronto.ca/The\\_Basics/Important\\_Dates.htm](http://www.students.utoronto.ca/The_Basics/Important_Dates.htm)

One of the major differences between France and Canada has to do with the rhythm of work. Courses in Ontario tend to demand a fair amount of work on a regular schedule. If you are in the Humanities (*Lettres*) or Social Sciences you will probably find yourself writing more papers and submitting more assignments than you are used to at home. We will leave it to you to decide whether the value and level of the work are comparable to what you know from your home university.

Work for a course must be handed in by a certain point in the term. You might be lucky and be enrolled in courses without a final examination. Also there are “take-home” (written at home) and “open-book” (with documents) exams.

The disadvantages of the Ontario system are obvious, but there are big advantages as well: When you’re done, you’re done. You can go skiing (or scuba diving) over Christmas with a

clear conscience.

Our advice, then, is to keep two things in mind: (1) Don’t take too many courses; and (2) don’t let things pile up until the last minute.

Remember, you are working in a foreign language and an academic culture with which you aren’t fully familiar, and you won’t be as efficient as you are at home, at the least at the beginning of the school year. So don’t miss first day of classes, and start studying from the very beginning.

The kinds of work demanded vary from course to course. Standard forms are the “paper” or “essay,” which may differ from the notion of *une dissertation* in France in that it puts slightly less emphasis on secondary sources and slightly more on your opinions; the mid-term examination; the final examination (“sit-down” or “take-home”), the test (a shorter examination), and the oral report. In the sciences, lab reports are also usual. In some fields (i.e., business) group projects and oral presentations are very important. In other fields there may be less group work than in Europe. And don’t forget: Students in Canada word-process all their papers.

Most universities have an academic counselling service, writing centre, or the like, which offers help on study habits and the writing of polished papers. This is not to be confused with services which actually write your papers for you, a form of cheating which can get students thrown out of the university. Avail yourself of the services your host university offers; you’ll not only improve your studying and writing, but you’ll get an interesting insight into the concept of the “essay” in Canada and how it differs from what you are used to.

Speaking of “cheating” and cultural differences, some European students find that Ontario students don’t cooperate readily on projects. This may have to do with a greater sense of competition, but in part it stems from a moralism that “everyone should do her or his own work” and that to collaborate is to be dishonest. Please keep these differences in mind.

In the past few years, with the increased use of the Internet, universities have reinforced their battle against academic dishonesty and more specifically plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as “representing someone else’s ideas or writing as your own.”

Some universities require that all papers be examined by some kind of plagiarism detection software (such as Turnitin.com).

Being accused of plagiarism can result in a long and painful disciplinary. Being convicted can result in a range of penalties, including an F on the piece of work and transcript notation. Make sure you fully understand the concept of plagiarism and know the penalties involved at your host university. If you are not certain about documenting sources, ask your instructor.

## Working and Studying

To be able to work you need a SIN. It's your Social Insurance Number, and without it you can't work in Canada. As an international student, you can get a SIN. The number will start with a 9, indicating to employers that you need special authorization to work. **You need to have a job offer to apply for a SIN.** The SIN card is free. Please check the following website: [www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/sc/sin/index.shtml](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/sc/sin/index.shtml).

A **contract of employment** from your host university or from an employer on campus will allow Human Resources Development Canada to issue your SIN. This means that it will be easy to get permission to work on campus (though finding a job may be a problem).

It will be extremely difficult for you to work outside the university, either during or after the academic term. If you are interested in working during your stay in Ontario, you should speak to the International Student Advisor at your host university. You will need a work permit, the fee for which is \$150. For more information see:

[www.cic.gc.ca/english/inFORMATION/applications/work.asp](http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/inFORMATION/applications/work.asp).

For tax (and other) purposes, make sure that you leave a valid address with your host university when you return to Europe, so that the university can send you the necessary receipts. If you do earn money, be prepared for a relatively high tax bill: you will probably not be eligible for a number of deductions otherwise available to permanent residents of Canada. For this reason, you should save all your receipts relating to your travel to Canada (plane ticket, hotel bills, health insurance receipts, etc.). See next section on Taxes.

## Taxes

If you are employed in Canada, you must file an income tax return (*Déclaration d'impôts*) by April 30 of the year following the calendar year in which the employment took place. These forms will be available in the winter of 2011 for income earned in 2010, and in the winter of 2012 for income earned in 2011. There are special forms for international students. Your International Student Office may have the forms on hand, or you can contact the Canada Revenue Agency or the Canadian Embassy in your country. For further information, see: [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/nrsdnts/ndvdlstdnts-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/nrsdnts/ndvdlstdnts-eng.html)

Canada has an add-on “Goods and Services Tax” (GST) which applies to a large number of items and services bought in Canada. The tax is currently 5%. Ontario has an add-on Provincial Sales Tax (PST) which is currently 8%. Starting July 1, 2010 both taxes will merge into the HST (Harmonized Sales Tax). The tax on many items will then be 13%.



**All prices in stores and restaurants are shown before adding the tax (and in restaurants, the tip). Don't underestimate your actual total cost.**

For example: if a restaurant bill comes to \$60.00, there will be taxes added on of \$4.80 (GST) and \$3.00 (PST); and a typical tip (15%) on the base amount would amount to \$9.00. The total, including taxes and tip, would then be \$76.80.

## Getting Credit at Your Home University

You will get a mark for every course in which you remained enrolled past the “drop” deadline (in other words, if you do not want a grade, make sure you “drop” the course officially in time). Your host university will issue a grade report at the end of the term or year; and you may also request (for a nominal fee) a transcript listing all the courses you took at your host university.

If getting course credit at home is important to you, you will want to document your work so that your home university will recognize it. Keep all course documentation: syllabi, marked assignments, course descriptions, course evaluation breakdowns, etc.

## Meeting People, Social Life, Recreation

It is natural for you to feel alone away from home. The Orientation Workshop in Ontario will ease your first shock of being in North America. You will get over this loneliness much more quickly – and go on to benefit much more from being in Canada – if you make the effort to meet Canadians, students and non-students.

You may know some of the Ontario students who studied in Rhône-Alpes in previous years, and they can be a great source of help and companionship. But we cannot recommend strongly enough that you take the initiative to meet and make new friends.

Here are three specific pieces of advice:

- 1) Don't get into the habit of speaking your mother tongue (unless it's French in a francophone setting!). If you establish a pattern of speaking one or both of Canada's official languages from the first day, even with your fellow exchange students, you will feel much more integrated, and you will interact more easily with Canadians and get more from your stay here. Remember that speaking your mother tongue is impolite when there are people around you who don't understand it.
- 2) The ORA group is a great source of support and fun. But don't become overly reliant on them. It will be disruptive to your studies and your chances to develop a "life of your own" in Canada.
- 3) Find a hobby-oriented or other interest group (drama club, chorus, environmentalist group, sports club) or volunteer work, and start participating! This is a simple and effective way to find Canadians who share your interests. Even a job on campus can be a good way to meet all kinds of people. And sometimes, volunteer work might be countable as an internship (*stage*).

Because of the pressure of the academic year, Canadian students tend to concentrate on work very early in the term. Also many of them hold a part-time job while studying. Partly for these reasons (but no doubt as part of our culture in general), Canadian students don't have the same kind of social life as do their colleagues in France. Going out to a pub, *se faire une petite bouffe* for the evening for serious or not-

so-serious discussions is not as common here as it is over there. Try to understand the Canadian way at the same time as you are sharing European ways with Canadians.

## Stereotyping and Intercultural Differences

Finding out about differences between French and Canadian society and culture (academic and otherwise) will be one of the most interesting things about your stay in Ontario. One must always be aware that generalizations are dangerous; indeed, a prolonged stay abroad is a very good way to become aware of the problems inherent in stereotypes.

Still, it is fair to say that Anglo-Canadian society (and to a certain extent North American anglophone society) can be quite prescriptive about "morals." And "morals" are defined quite broadly. This Handbook has already informed you about formal rules regarding smoking and the consumption of alcohol, and about different concepts of "cooperation" and "cheating."

There are also informal rules about "fair behaviour" while standing in line. Conversely, behaving like a "European" in a Canadian line will earn you unfriendly looks and comments.

## Communications

### Telephones

Compared to Europe, the rates for land lines are reasonable. Canada has not yet discovered the concept of the "message unit" (*crédit temps*) for local calls, so you can talk forever without running up a bill. For long-distance service, do some comparative shopping. Pre-paid calling cards are convenient and offer an excellent deal. You call a local number and with a secret code you access overseas numbers.

If you have a computer you can use a peer-to-peer Internet telephone service such as Skype. Check their website at [www.skype.com/intl/en/](http://www.skype.com/intl/en/).

For more traditional phones, telephone bills include separate items for the basic monthly charge and for individual long-distance calls (by date, time, number, and length of call). This form of billing makes it easy to share a phone with housemates or roommates.

- *Land Lines*

At the beginning of the fall term, Bell Canada [www.bell.ca](http://www.bell.ca), the major telephone company, or other companies may come to campus and make it easy to sign up for telephone service. If not, you can visit a “phone store” and arrange for service. It usually does not take longer than a week to get your number and phone. If you are living in residence, you may find that the university has in effect decided for you which service you will use. Calling Canada is hardly ever cheap with France Télécom, but often other providers (call-by-call) offer good rates. Check out [www.francetelecom.com/](http://www.francetelecom.com/).

If you are a telephone subscriber, you may be able to get a “Calling Card,” a special credit card which allows you to make long-distance calls from any telephone, including public payphones, and bill them to your “Canadian home” number.

- *Public Phones*

They operate with major credit cards or a Calling Card. Otherwise you’ll have to use cash (50 cents is the least you can get away with).

- *Phone Numbers*

 **In an emergency – for police, fire, ambulance – dial 9-1-1.** This number works in most of North America (except in some very small communities). **If you are asking someone to dial for you, say: “Please dial nine-one-one.”**

If you are in a university office or room, you may need to get an “outside line” (*appel à l’extérieur*) before dialling 9-1-1; often you first dial 9 before the actual number.

Universities have their own internal emergency numbers and police or security as well.

**Please contact the Program Office or our emergency numbers listed on the ORA websites if you are in need. But in a real emergency, call 9-1-1 first.**

To get someone’s phone number, dial 411 for “directory assistance.” You will be asked which city and the person’s name. On the web, the information is available at [www.canada411.ca/](http://www.canada411.ca/).

**Local Calls:** Traditionally, for local phone calls, you dial only the seven-digit number itself. With a shortage of numbers available, things have however become more complex.

The Toronto area has multiple area codes. 416 and 647 cover Metropolitan Toronto itself, and 905 covers surrounding areas (along with 289). Within Toronto you must dial ten digits, including the area code (but without the “1” in front that you need for long distance). So-called “10-digit dialling” is now required for area codes 519 and 226 (Southwestern Ontario), 613 (Ottawa and eastern Ontario including Kingston), 705 (the “near North” with Sudbury and North Bay).

Our advice: Get a local student or your host university’s International Office to explain how to dial in your area.

**Long Distance (North America):** For North American long distance, dial 1 + area code + number. Some area codes indicate that the call is “toll free” (800, 866, 877, and 888), but be aware that sometimes the “free status” only works within Canada or the U.S. but not between them.



**Long Distance (Overseas):** The formula is: 011 + “country code” + area code without the first 0 + number. Thus, to “direct dial”:

**France,** dial 011 33 and then 9 digits without the first 0.

- *Cell phones*

It’s hard to advise you whether you should or should not have a cell phone. Because local calls are free from a residential line, a cell phone may be less indispensable than in Europe. Be aware that you pay for “air-time,” whether you initiate the call or receive it. The major service providers are: Rogers Wireless, Telus, Fido, Virgin Mobile Canada, and Bell Mobility. Check their websites. By all means do comparative shopping!

### **“Regular” Mail with Canada Post**

Besides regular post offices, postal outlets can be found in pharmacies, drug stores or convenience stores. Canada’s version of the *code postal* is the so-called “postal code,” (in the U.S. they are called “zip codes”) which consists of alternating letters and numbers (as in: N6A 3K7). In Ontario the first letter will be K, L, M, or N, depending where you are in the Province.

It currently costs \$0.57 + tax to mail a regular-sized letter within Canada, \$1.00 + tax to the USA and \$1.70 + tax to Europe.

## Electronic Mail



Please make sure the Program Office has your “real” e-mail address. Hotmail and Yahoo addresses have experienced problems in the past, especially with attachments. If you change your address, please let us know immediately. The Program Office’s addresses are [ontra@yorku.ca](mailto:ontra@yorku.ca) and [dtodd@yorku.ca](mailto:dtodd@yorku.ca). Remember that your host university will communicate with you using your official e-mail address at that university. Check that account regularly.

## Travel

If Europe is the land of trains, Canada is the land of buses and planes. Intercity buses (*les cars*) are a fairly inexpensive and fairly convenient way to go medium distances. For longer distances, you might be able to get some cheap flights. At several universities you’ll find a branch of “Travel CUTS,” (Canadian University Travel Service) [www.travelcuts.com/](http://www.travelcuts.com/) travel agency which specializes in student travel and is owned by Canadian student organizations (this is not an endorsement). You can call them toll free at 1-866-246-9762 in Canada.

You should get an International Student Identity Card (ISIC card) in your home country, or you can buy it in Canada at any Travel CUTS location or at most Via Rail stations for \$20.00 (\$21.50 if by mail).

- *Air Travel*

Look for “**seat sales.**” Major companies include:

Air Canada [www.aircanada.com/](http://www.aircanada.com/)

Westjet [www.westjet.com/](http://www.westjet.com/)

Air Transat [www.airtransat.com/](http://www.airtransat.com/)

Porter Airlines [www.flyporter.com/](http://www.flyporter.com/)

There are of course many more airlines in the U.S.

- *Trains and Buses*

They are of course also very convenient. An ISIC card will get you a substantial discount on the full economy fare with Via Rail ([www.viarail.ca/](http://www.viarail.ca/)), without an advance-purchase requirement (it is often advisable to book in advance, as trains usually sell out at busy times). You can save 50% off regular fare with Via “6-Pack.” Via Rail has a special webpage called Via Campus for students: [www.viacampus.ca/](http://www.viacampus.ca/).

Greyhound Canada, the bus company, ([www.greyhound.ca/](http://www.greyhound.ca/)) offers student fares and other special offers. See: [www.greyhound.ca/HOME/en/DealsAndDiscounts/Deals.aspx](http://www.greyhound.ca/HOME/en/DealsAndDiscounts/Deals.aspx)

Keep in mind that trains are more expensive and less frequent than buses.

- *Drive-away*

You might also want to consider applying to a “drive-away” company, which arranges for cars to be delivered to their owners in various locations. You drive the car. The arrangements for your expenses and any fee you may have to pay will vary. You can try this one in Toronto: [www.torontodriveaway.com/](http://www.torontodriveaway.com/). They offer Snow-bird Seasonal Services. (“Snowbirds” are Canadians – usually retired – who spend the winter in warm climates. Common destinations include Canada East and West, Arizona, California, Florida).

- *Car rental*

There are many companies and many deals in Ontario to rent a car. Car rental is the cheapest and most convenient way of traveling if you have a minimum of four passengers. You have to be at least 21 years old to rent a car. If you are under 25, however, insurance will be more expensive. Gas is also becoming more expensive but is still noticeably cheaper than in Europe.

You can even rent a used car. Check the following website: [www.rentawreck.ca](http://www.rentawreck.ca).

Car rental companies like you to have a credit card. If you have the right one (check at home), your insurance costs may be covered automatically. If you will be renting a car, a card that covers insurance in this way can pay for itself quickly. If you do rent a car, make certain that you are fully covered by insurance (“no deductible”) and that everyone who will be driving the car is listed on the rental agreement. If a non-listed driver is involved in an accident the insurance company can and will refuse to pay anything.



If you are renting a car, always inspect both the outside (for dents and scrapes) and the trunk and glove compartment before driving off.

If you have both a valid driver’s license from another country and a valid International Driver’s Permit, as a visitor to Ontario you may drive for up to one year without having to get an Ontario license. As long as you are on the ORA Program, and as long as you do not buy a car while in Canada, you are considered a

“visitor” under these provisions. You should get your International Driver’s permit in your home country from *La Préfecture* in France.

Check the website [www.gov.on.ca/](http://www.gov.on.ca/) to find information on Ontario. For information on driving in the Province of Ontario and in Canada, check these pages of the Ministry of Transportation: [www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/) and [www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandy/visiting.htm](http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandy/visiting.htm).

If you resign from the Program, buy a car, or otherwise cease to be a visitor, you must take both the theoretical and practical driving test.

If you are thinking about buying a car, get a letter (in English), from your automobile insurance company at home certifying that you have an accident-free driving record. If you do insist on buying a car, make sure you do it legally and that you observe all the rules on registration and insurance as well as on driver’s licenses. Our official advice: Don’t buy a car, new or used.

- *Public transportation*

Within cities, public transportation is available. In Toronto, the Toronto Transport Commission is known by its initials: TTC: [www.ttc.ca](http://www.ttc.ca). In Ottawa, there is [www.octranspo.com/](http://www.octranspo.com/).

In parts of Southern Ontario there is GO Transit ([www.gotransit.com/](http://www.gotransit.com/)), a regional service operating trains and buses.

In smaller cities public transportation is not as good as in Europe. Student discounts are not as usual as in France, although daily and monthly passes are often available. Ask the International Office of your host university whether you can get a special student discount.

- *Cycling*

Cycling is possible, but remember that whenever you use a bicycle you have to obey traffic rules, and the law requires that you wear a helmet. Winter weather may also make cycling difficult and hazardous. Sometimes it’s better to leave the bike at home. And in this vein: Don’t bring your bike from Europe.

- *Shuttle buses*

At some universities shuttle buses are available during certain hours. For example, there is a free shuttle between the two campuses at York University (Keele and Glendon).

- *Walk-Home Services*

Every university has a type of “escort” service to walk you, by request, to campus destinations which are less safe areas.

For information on these services, check with student services, campus security, or the international office at your host university.

## Your Participation in the Program: One Year Only

Participation in the program is limited to one academic year.

The ORA Program is conceived as a system-wide exchange of students, not as a study-abroad program for individual students, nor as a “jumping-off year” toward a degree at an Ontario university.

We want as many students as possible to participate in the exchange. This means that we must limit participation to one year, so that each year at least 100 new students – 50 each from each side of the Atlantic – have an opportunity to participate.

When you return to your home region and university, we expect you to share the experiences and knowledge which you gained overseas with your colleagues, teachers, and society. We also hope that you will help sustain the relationship between Ontario and Rhône-Alpes by assisting newly-arrived students from Ontario who have come to study at your home university.

It is not unusual for students participating in an exchange to become so much a part of the life of the host university and society that they do not wish to leave. This has happened in the case of Ontario students studying in Rhône-Alpes and Rhône-Alpes students studying in Ontario. Sometimes it is the general life-style that appeals. Sometimes it is the academic life that is attractive. And sometimes it is a personal relationship that makes it difficult to leave.



If you wish to stay on, you must be prepared to apply to an Ontario university under all the terms which apply to applicants from abroad. That is, you must fulfill all the criteria for admission; you are subject to the normal enrolment limitations; and you must pay full fees, including the differential fee for international students. Application deadlines for September may be as

early as December of the preceding year. There are very, very few scholarships available for international graduate students, but they are issued on a competitive basis and are very difficult to get. Just because a professor agrees to work with you does not guarantee that you will receive a scholarship.

If you do succeed in staying on, you cannot do so under the auspices of the ORA Program. As harsh as it may sound, the Ontario Program Office will not entertain requests for exceptions (in either direction).

## Closing Formalities

If you registered with your home country's consulate or an embassy as a citizen living abroad, you should notify them when you are leaving Canada.

**Embassy:** [www.ambafrance-ca.org/](http://www.ambafrance-ca.org/)  
42 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, ON K1M  
2C9; Tel : 613-789-1795; Fax : 613-  
562-3735

**Consulate:** [www.consulfrance-toronto.org/](http://www.consulfrance-toronto.org/)  
2 Bloor Street East, Suite 2200,  
Toronto, ON, M4W 1A8; Tel: 416-847-  
1900; Fax: 416-847-1901

Other than that, you don't have to deregister from any city offices or from the university, but you should remember to get yourself reinstated at your home institution. Check in good time to ensure that your student authorization (study or work permit) to remain in Canada won't expire prematurely. Please leave a forwarding address with your host university and the Program Office — we'd very much like to stay in contact with you.

When you arrive home, do not be surprised if you experience a "reverse culture shock." Some past participants report that they not only had to adjust to the "old ways" of being a student; they also had to come to terms with the fact that they and some of their friends had grown apart. That is a danger of a year abroad, but it is also a way of saying that this year will change your life. On balance, most participants find this change good.

**In the meantime, all of us associated  
with the Programs wish you  
a very good year!**

## Appendix 1: Contacts at Ontario Universities

Note: The “Primary Contact Person” is the person who has primary responsibility for liaising with the ORA Exchange Program. Phone numbers are given for the entire university where extensions (indicated by x) are known; otherwise the area code is indicated and the direct-dial number is listed. To reach an extension, dial the university main number and wait for instructions. You will usually be prompted to key in the extension.

| UNIVERSITY / INTERNATIONAL OFFICE                                  | TELEPHONE (T) / FAX (F)                            | PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON  | INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ADVISOR   |
|--|--|---|---|
| BROCK OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL SERVICES                             | T:905-688-5550<br>F:905-688-2074                   | Ms. Geeta Powell x4318<br><a href="mailto:gpowell@brocku.ca">gpowell@brocku.ca</a>  | Ms. Geeta Powell x4318<br><a href="mailto:gpowell@brocku.ca">gpowell@brocku.ca</a>  |
| CARLETON INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE (ISSO)              | T:613-520-2519<br>F:613-520-3419                   | Ms. Christine Marland<br>613-520-2519<br><a href="mailto:christine_marland@carleton.ca">christine_marland@carleton.ca</a>   | Ms. Christine Marland<br>613-520-2519<br><a href="mailto:christine_marland@carleton.ca">christine_marland@carleton.ca</a>   |
| GUELPH CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS                           | T:519-824-4120<br>F:519-767-0756                   | Ms. Lisa Blenkinsop x58466<br><a href="mailto:goabroad@uoguelph.ca">goabroad@uoguelph.ca</a>  | Ms. Allison Broadbent<br><a href="mailto:abroadbe@uoguelph.ca">abroadbe@uoguelph.ca</a>   |
| LAKEHEAD OFFICE OF GRADUATE & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (OGIS)         | T:807-343-8133<br>T:807-343-8068<br>F:807-346-7829 | Ms. Wendy Bons<br>807-343-8133<br><a href="mailto:wbons@lakeheadu.ca">wbons@lakeheadu.ca</a>  | Ms. Wendy Bons<br>807-343-8133<br><a href="mailto:wbons@lakeheadu.ca">wbons@lakeheadu.ca</a>  |
| LAURENTIAN INTERNATIONAL   | T:705-675-1151<br>F:705 671 3833                   | Ms. Audrey Manninen x3706<br><a href="mailto:amanninen@laurentian.ca">amanninen@laurentian.ca</a><br><a href="mailto:international_exchange@laurentian.ca">international_exchange@laurentian.ca</a> | Ms. Audrey Manninen x3706<br><a href="mailto:amanninen@laurentian.ca">amanninen@laurentian.ca</a><br><a href="mailto:international_exchange@laurentian.ca">international_exchange@laurentian.ca</a> |
| MCMASTER INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES MACABROAD                  | T:905-525-9140<br>x24700<br>F:905-527-6510         | Mr. Marcos Costa x27701<br><a href="mailto:costama@mcmaster.ca">costama@mcmaster.ca</a><br>(Manager and advisor)  | Ms. Theresa Bae x26105<br><a href="mailto:baether@mcmaster.ca">baether@mcmaster.ca</a>  |
| NIPISSING INTERNATIONAL SERVICES                                   | T:705-474-3450<br>F:705-495-2850                   | Ms. Melissa Toupin Laforge x 4540<br><a href="mailto:melissat@nipissingu.ca">melissat@nipissingu.ca</a>   | Ms. Karen Strang x4105<br><a href="mailto:karens@nipissingu.ca">karens@nipissingu.ca</a>  |
| OTTAWA INTERNATIONAL OFFICE  | T:613-562-5847<br>F:613-562-5100                   | Ms. Nathalie Dutrisac x1450<br><a href="mailto:ndutrisa@uottawa.ca">ndutrisa@uottawa.ca</a>   | Mr. Peter Szyszlo<br>613 562-5800 x3326<br><a href="mailto:pszyszlo@uOttawa.ca">pszyszlo@uOttawa.ca</a>   |
| QUEEN'S INTERNATIONAL CENTRE                                       | T:613-533-6000<br>F:613-533-3159                   | Ms. Laura Esford x77678<br><a href="mailto:esford@queensu.ca">esford@queensu.ca</a>   | Ms. Laura Esford x77678<br><a href="mailto:esford@queensu.ca">esford@queensu.ca</a>   |
| RYERSON OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS                            | T:416-979-5026<br>F:416-979-5352                   | Ms. Gigi Law x4112<br><a href="mailto:h8law@ryerson.ca">h8law@ryerson.ca</a>  | Mr. David Begg x4078<br><a href="mailto:dbegg@ryerson.ca">dbegg@ryerson.ca</a>  |
| UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT EXCHANGE OFFICE (ISXO) | T:416-946-3739<br>F:416-978-6110                   | Mr. Marc Arnold<br><a href="mailto:marc.arnold@utoronto.ca">marc.arnold@utoronto.ca</a><br><a href="mailto:student.exchange@utoronto.ca">student.exchange@utoronto.ca</a>                           | Mr. Marc Arnold<br><a href="mailto:marc.arnold@utoronto.ca">marc.arnold@utoronto.ca</a><br><a href="mailto:student.exchange@utoronto.ca">student.exchange@utoronto.ca</a>                           |
| WATERLOO INTERNATIONAL   | T:519-888-4567<br>F:519-725-9971                   | Ms. Maria Lango x33999<br><a href="mailto:mlango@uwaterloo.ca">mlango@uwaterloo.ca</a>  | Ms. Maria Lango x33999<br><a href="mailto:mlango@uwaterloo.ca">mlango@uwaterloo.ca</a>  |
| WESTERN ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES                     | T:519-661-2111<br>F:519-661-3949                   | Ms. Bibiana Alcalá x85196<br>F:519-661-3949<br><a href="mailto:balcalav@uwo.ca">balcalav@uwo.ca</a>   | Ms. Bibiana Alcalá x85196<br>F:519-661-3949<br><a href="mailto:balcalav@uwo.ca">balcalav@uwo.ca</a>   |
| WINDSOR INTERNATIONAL  | T:519-253-3000<br>F:519-561-1472                   | Ms. Michelle Fitzgerald x3934<br><a href="mailto:exchange@uwindsor.ca">exchange@uwindsor.ca</a><br><a href="mailto:michelle@uwindsor.ca">michelle@uwindsor.ca</a>                                   | Academic Coordinator for Student Exchange<br>Dr. Alan Gold (519) 253-4232 x3034<br><a href="mailto:gold1@uwindsor.ca">gold1@uwindsor.ca</a>   |
| YORK INTERNATIONAL   | T:416-736-5177<br>F:416-736-5176                   | Ms. Norma Speranza<br>416-736-2100 x55177<br><a href="mailto:roxanneo@yorku.ca">roxanneo@yorku.ca</a>   | Ms. Beth Alaksa 416-736-2100 x77623<br><a href="mailto:exchange@yorku.ca">exchange@yorku.ca</a><br><a href="mailto:balaksa@yorku.ca">balaksa@yorku.ca</a>   |

| UNIVERSITY /<br>INTERNATIONAL OFFICE | TELEPHONE (T)<br>FAX (F)                   | PRIMARY<br>CONTACT PERSON                  | INTERNATIONAL<br>STUDENT ADVISOR  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| ONTARIO PROGRAM OFFICE               | T:416-736-2100<br>x40006<br>F:416-736-5709 | Prof. Louise Lewin<br>416-736-2100 x88571  | Ms. Agnes Poleszczuk x40006<br><a href="mailto:ontra@yorku.ca">ontra@yorku.ca</a><br>Ms. Dagmar Todd x22919<br><a href="mailto:dtodd@yorku.ca">dtodd@yorku.ca</a> |
| ORA After-Hour<br>Emergency Numbers  | T:416-625-3292<br>T: 905-239-6789          | Ms. Agnes Poleszczuk<br>Prof. Louise Lewin |   |

## Appendix 2: Technical Terms

| FRENCH  | ENGLISH                              |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| CM et TD  | Contact hours (lectures & tutorials) |
| Guide de l'étudiant                                     | Course calendar                      |
| Polycopiés  | Course kit                           |
| Section / UER   | Department                           |
| Inscription pédagogique                                 | Enrolment                            |
| Travail écrit (dissertation, etc.)                      | Essay / paper                        |
| 1) Poste (téléphone) 2) Prolongation                    | Extension                            |
| 1) Faculté 2) professeur                                | Faculty                              |
| Examen  | Final exam                           |
| Étudiant(e) de 1 <sup>ère</sup> année                   | Freshmen/Women (frosch)              |
| Direction des Relations Internationales                 | International Office                 |
| Bail  | Lease / Rental contract              |
| Lettre d'admission                                      | Letter / offer of admission          |
| Passeport à lecture optique                             | Machine-readable passport            |
| Note  | Mark, Grade                          |
| Partiel   | Mid-term exam                        |
| Parent le plus proche                                   | Next of kin                          |
| Auditeur/trice officiellement inscrit(e) dans les cours | Non-degree/special student           |
| Code postal   | Postal code                          |
| Procuration   | Power of attorney                    |
| Pré-requis  | Program requirements                 |
| Une décharge  | Release form                         |
| Rapport   | Report                               |
| Résidence/cité universitaire                            | Residence                            |
| Inscription administrative                              | Registration                         |
| Groupe ou groupe de TD                                  | Section                              |
| Carte d'activités culturelles et sportives (payante)    | Student activity fee                 |
| Tarif étudiant  | Student discount                     |
| Sous-louer  | Sublet                               |
| Contenu des unités d'enseignement                       | Supplemental/mini-calendar           |
| 1) Plan de cours, 2) Contenu du cours                   | Syllabus                             |
| Déclaration d'impôts                                    | Tax return                           |
| Pourboire   | Tip                                  |
| Relevé de notes/ dossier universitaire                  | Transcript                           |
| Droits d'inscription                                    | Tuition fee                          |
| Exemption de droits d'inscription                       | Tuition waiver                       |
| Auberge de jeunesse                                     | Youth Hostel                         |

## Appendix 3: Common Abbreviations

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| #                     | "Number Sign" (e.g. on a telephone or before a number)  |
| 911                   | "Nine-One-One": Common emergency number for police, fire, ambulance   |
| €1.00 (February 2010) | € 1.00 = CAD \$1.46 = US \$1.04   |
| CAD \$1.00 = 100¢     | A nickel = 5¢; a dime = 10¢; a quarter = 25¢; a buck = \$1 (coin = a Loonie); two bucks = \$2 (coin = a Toonie) |
| 401                   | The Four-Oh-One: highway between Windsor and the Ontario / Québec border  |
| a.m., am / p.m., pm   | <i>Ante meridiem</i> : before noon / <i>Post meridiem</i> (after noon)  |
| ASAP                  | As Soon As Possible   |
| ATM                   | Automated Teller Machine ( <i>DAB</i> )   |
| BC / BCE              | Before Christ / Before the Common Era   |
| BYOB                  | Bring Your Own Bottle (drinks will not be supplied at a party)  |
| CAA                   | Canadian Automobile Association   |
| CBC / SRC             | Canadian Broadcasting Corporation / Société Radio-Canada  |
| CBIE                  | Canadian Bureau for International Education   |
| COD                   | Cash On Delivery (pay the delivery person for a package)  |
| ESL / FSL             | English as a Second Language / French as a Second Language  |
| EST                   | Eastern Standard Time (time zone)   |
| FAQ                   | Frequently Asked Questions  |
| F/T                   | Full-Time (see P/T for Part-Time)   |
| FYI                   | For Your Information  |
| GA / RA / TA          | Graduate Assistant / Research Assistant / Teaching Assistant  |
| GP                    | General Practitioner (family doctor)  |
| GPA                   | Grade Point Average   |
| GTA                   | Greater Toronto Area (City of Toronto + surrounding municipalities)   |
| GST (5%) / PST (8%)   | Goods and Services Tax (like <i>TVA</i> ); Provincial Sales Tax   |
| HST (13%)             | Harmonized Sales Tax (will replace GST and PST starting July 1, 2010)   |
| ID                    | Identification (card) ( <i>Pièce d'identité</i> )   |
| ISC                   | International Student Centre  |
| LCBO                  | Liquor Control Board of Ontario (beer, wine store)  |
| LLBO                  | Liquor Licensing Board of Ontario   |
| N/A                   | Not Available, Not Applicable (e.g. information on a form or survey)  |
| NHL                   | National Hockey League  |
| OHIP                  | Ontario Health Insurance Plan   |
| OPP                   | Ontario Provincial Police   |
| PJs                   | Pyjamas   |
| P/T                   | Part-Time (see F/T)   |
| PTO                   | Please Turn Over (the page)   |
| Q&A                   | Question and Answer (session)   |
| QEW                   | Queen Elizabeth Way (Highway from Toronto to Hamilton)  |
| RCMP / GRC            | Royal Canadian Mounted Police / Gendarmerie Royale du Canada  |
| RSVP                  | <i>On invitations: Réservez s'il vous plait!</i>  |
| SIN                   | Social Insurance Number   |
| TBA                   | To be announced   |
| T.O.                  | Toronto   |
| TTC                   | Toronto Transit Commission (public transit; buses, subways, streetcars)   |
| UHIP / RAMU           | University Health Insurance Plan / Régime d'Assurance Maladie Universitaire                                     |

## Personal Notes

This handbook belongs to \_\_\_\_\_